

Governor O'Malley's Record on Securing and Expanding the Vote

In contrast to other states that have enacted stricter government-issued photo ID laws or curtailed early voting opportunities that result in lower turnout, Governor O'Malley has taken a number of steps to expand the opportunity to vote, and to secure the right to vote.

Expanded Marylanders' Ability to Vote

Created and Expanded Early Voting – Governor O'Malley signed legislation enabling on-site early voting in Maryland. The original law took effect for the 2010 election, and allowed for six days of early voting to occur. In 2013, he proposed and signed legislation that expanded early vote sites and added two days of early voting. According to the Schaefer Center for Public Policy, early votes accounted for 12% of votes in 2010 and nearly 16% of votes in 2012.¹

Established Same-Day Registration – In contrast to a trend occurring in other states that are enacting stricter government issued photo ID laws, Governor O'Malley proposed and signed same-day registration legislation. Starting in 2016, Maryland residents will be able to register at early vote sites and vote there.

Online Voter Registration and Services – In 2011, Governor O'Malley signed legislation authorizing the State Board of Elections to set up an online voter registration system that has registered over 70,000 have since implementation. In 2012 alone, 108,000 Marylanders used the system to register or modify their voter registration.² Governor O'Malley signed further legislation in 2013, which permits the State Board of Elections to create an online absentee ballot system. This will allow voters to obtain an absentee ballot, mark it, print it out, and send back to the board of elections.

Spearheaded National Initiatives

Founding Member of a National Voter Information Sharing System – Maryland is a founding member of the national "Electronic Registration Information Center," which shares information from official data, such as voter rolls and Department of Motor Vehicle records, and federal postal or Social Security death records, to ensure clean and efficient voter rolls. The system, set up with the assistance of Pew Charitable Trusts, now has nine state members and DC.³

First to Sign National Popular Vote Agreement – In order to make sure that every Maryland vote carries the same importance regardless of location, Maryland was the first state to sign onto the National Popular Vote Agreement. Once a majority of electoral votes are secured to the agreement, states will award their electoral votes to the winner of the national popular vote.⁴

Secured the People's Right to Vote

Restored Voting Rights to Rehabilitated Marylanders – In 2007, Governor O'Malley signed legislation that would restore voting rights to those who completed a court-ordered sentence of imprisonment, including any term of parole or probation, for a felony conviction. At the time, it was estimated that 52,000 Marylanders had their right to vote restored.⁵

Allowed Minors to Register to Vote before Their 18th Birthday – Maryland passed legislation allowing residents who are at least 16 years of age to register to vote. Further, young Marylanders can now participate in primaries as long as the general election falls after their 18th birthday.

Secured Voting Rights for the Mentally Disabled – Governor O'Malley signed a 2010 bill that amended a law that was keeping individuals under guardianship for mental disability from being able to register to vote. Now a court must find clear and convincing evidence an individual cannot communicate a desire to participate in the voting process.

Ensured Maryland's Military Members Vote – Governor O'Malley signed a bipartisan bill that moved the date of Maryland's state and presidential primary to earlier dates, ensuring that military members are given enough time to vote under the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act.

Reformed Campaign Finance Laws

Closing Corporate Campaign Finance Loopholes – In 2013, Governor O'Malley signed the Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2013, one of the aggressive reforms in years. Under the bill, a corporate loophole was closed that allowed individuals to donate above their limit if they contribute money through business entities.

Brought Transparency to Campaign Finance – Governor O'Malley signed legislation in 2012 that required disclosure of the occupation and employer of contributors who donate \$500 or more to a campaign.

¹ Schaefer Center for Public Policy, "Voting and the Administration of Elections in Maryland," [1/15/14](#)

² Data from the Maryland State Board of Elections

³ For more information, see the official Electronic Registration Information Center website [here](#).

⁴ Currently 10 states and 126 Electoral Votes have signed on. For more information, see the National Popular Vote website [here](#).

⁵ Baltimore Sun, [7/3/07](#)